II. *A Letter from Sir* William Beeſton, *Governour of* Jamaica, *to Mr.* Charles Bernard, *containing ſome Obſervations about the Barometer, and of a Hot Bath in that Iſland.*

Jamaica, April the 8th, 1696.

SIR,

BY the *Ruby* Man of War, in *December* laſt, I gave you the beſt Account I could of the Comet that appeared here in *October*; but the Weather at that time was often Cloudy: I had no Inſtruments nor Celeſtial Globe, and am not perfectly acquainted with the Southern Conſtellations; for which Reaſons the Relation was but indifferent.

Now having no Acquaintance with any of the *Royal Society*, I have ſome other Remarks to make to you, which I refer to you to acquaint ſome of them with, or not, as you think it may be worth their Notice.

When I came from *England*, I cauſed my Barometer (which had wrought very well in *England* ſome Years) to be carefully put up, with intent to try if the Air had the ſame Effect on the ☿ here as in *England*; but by ſome Misfortune, when I came to take it out my Tube was broken, and I could never procure another till about *Chriſtmas* laſt; then I met with one of 36 Inches, and cleanſed all my Frame and the Tube very well, put my ☿ through double Cloth, and made that Fine, and ſet it up with all the Exactneſs I could; when it was firſt in the Ciſtern the ☿ ſtood one degree below Changeable; I diligently obſerved it every day, and found that in the Mornings before the ☉ aroſe it would be there; and as the Heat encreaſed with the Day, it ſunk to within one De-

The Royal Society is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve, and extend access to *Philosophical Transactions (1683-1775).* www.jstor.org

gree above Rain ; there it continued ſeveral Days, and never altered above Three Degrees, tho' ſometimes Fair, ſometimesRain,and ſometimes Cloudy; and one Morning leaving open my Window, and the ☉ having South declination, it ſhone in on the viſible part of the Tube, and in half an Hour it ſunk 3 Degrees ; (which I never obſerved it to do with Heat in *England*) I preſently ſhut the Window, and in one Hour it aroſe again to within one Degree of Changeable ; after it had kept this Courſe in ſeveral Weathers, for ſix Weeks together, I began to doubt if it were well adjuſted, and therefore took it down, new filled the Tube, turn'd it three or four times up and down, to let out the Air, and put it up with great care, and ever ſince it continues the ſame, never by one Degree to Changeable,nor down by one Degree to Rain ; ſo that the whole Progreſs of the ☿ is but $\frac{1}{16}$ of an Inch ; whether the Air here be ſo much higher, and ſo much more conſtant from Viciſſitudes then in colder Climates, I muſt leave to the *Magi* to conſider.

Another thing I have to tell you, is, that for many Years paſt it has been known, that here is a very hot Spring of Mineral Water ; but being an uncouth Way for about ſix Miles, from any uſual Roads, and amongſt Hills, Woods, and Rocks, it has not been frequented but accidentally by Hunters, who are a laborious People and make few Remarks. Ever ſince I came hither I have been prompting People to try it, but the diſtance and trouble has hindred till this laſt Month ; two, the one very much Macerated with the Belly-ach, and another with the Pox, as is ſuppoſed, went to it, carri'd Cloths, built a Hut, to keep them from the Rain and Sun ; and both preſently, by Drinking and Bathing found ſuch Eaſe, that in about ten Days they return'd perfectly Cured. It comes out of a Rock, in a freſh Current, near to a fine Rivulet of good cool Wa-

ter,

ter, but is ſo hot, they all affirm it ſoon Boyls Eggs; ſome ſay Craw-fiſh, Chickens, and even a Turkey; but perhaps this laſt wants good Confirmation. However it's certain, that near where it comes forth, there is no enduring any part of the Body but it takes off the Skin, it Cures Ulcers, and contracted Nerves and Sinews in a few Days to a Miracle. Colonel *Beckford*, who was given over by the Phyſicians, with Pains in his Bowels very Acute, that had worn him out, and another for the Veneral Diſeaſe; and one for the Belly-ach are now gone up; and perhaps before I ſeal this we may hear from them; and if it Cures them, it muſt be of that virtue and efficacy, that perhaps there's not the like known in the World; We are in Hopes it will alſo do for the Gout; and if it has all theſe Qualities, it will bring the *Spaniards*, and all the Nations about us for Cure, and make the Iſland famous.

It has been try'd with Gauls in my ſight, and it makes the Water in Twenty four Hours look only like Canary, or Old Hock. But we have a fine large River runs by the ſides of this Town, which ſerves all the People for Drinking and other Uſes, and was by the *Spaniards* call'd *Rio Cobre*, or the *Copper River*; this now our Curioſity has led us to try with Gauls, and in one Night the Water turns to a deep Green, more enclining to Black, deeper Coloured then any Emerauld I ever ſaw, which makes me doubt the Copper Mines in it are not enough digeſted, and that its unwholſome, but were the ſame more refined and excellent, it would be a Salubrious Water; this will put us upon trying moſt of the Water we drink of in the Country, where is abundance of Springs and Rivers; but I believe moſt of them Impregnated with ſome Mineral or other.

Sir, It's now the 18th of *April*, ſince that above; Col. *Beckford* is finely Recovered, and the other almoſt Cured of his Ulcers, ſo that the Water is beyond doubt, and many are reſorting to it. And ſince that time I have tryed ſeveral Water-Springs, and Rivers hereabouts, and find them all ting'd with ſome Metal or other, more or leſs, ſo that we know not the Riches that may be in the Earth, nor the Value of the Vegetables; and it's pity ſome Ingenious People are not imployed to enquire into them.

Whether this be worth your Reading or no, I know not; however, I pray you to accept of it from

Yours, &c.

III. *An Account of a ſtrange kind of Earth, taken up near* Smyrna, *of which is made Soap, together with the way of making it, Communicated by Dr.* Edward Smith, *F.R.S.*

THERE is a conſiderable natural Curioſity in the Neighbourhood of *Smyrna*, call'd by the *Franks Soap-Earth*, and has no other proper diſtinguiſhing Name among the *Turks* or *Greeks*. 'Tis found only in two Places near *Duraclea*, a large open Village, about ſix Leagues to the Eaſtward of *Smyrna*; and in a very flat plain, about a League Weſtward of the River *Hermus*. 'Tis a fine Soap, and at the firſt gathering whitiſh Earth, which boileth or ſhoots up out of the Earth. 'Tis gathered always before Sun Riſe, and in Mornings when there falls no Dew, ſo that a ſtock muſt be laid in for the whole Year in the Summer Months. It comes up in ſome Places an Inch or two above the Surface of the